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## Migrant Fishers' Cultural Funds of Knowledge and Translanguaging Praxis for the Development of Contextualized Instructional Material: A Narrative Ethnography



**Abstract:** - Fishing is a flourishing industry in Antique, Philippines, which led to the mushrooming settlement of Cebuano-speaking migrant fishers in the coastal villages. With the implementation of the K to 12, pressing concerns about the lack of contextualized instructional materials (IM) in these trans-local spaces emerged. This study aimed to generate the cultural funds of knowledge and translanguaging praxis of migrant fishers as bases for developing contextualized instructional material. Under the lens of narrative ethnography and cultural memory banking as a mediational tool, various “seeds” about the knowledge, beliefs, and practices of migrant fishers were documented in memory bank charts. Translingual narratives were analyzed. Participants were purposively chosen and all qualitative data were analyzed qualitatively using manual coding and QDA Lite Miner software processing. Cultural beliefs and practices in fishing were presented in memory bank charts and analyzed adapting Polkinghorne’s analysis of narratives. Contextualized storybooks accompanied by a teacher’s guide were developed, validated, evaluated, and pilot-tested. It resulted in a “very acceptable” for the storybook and an “excellent” rating for the teacher’s guide. The study recommends that school heads create opportunities to involve teachers, parents, and other people in the coastal community to interact beyond the classroom setting. Contextualizing community resources and indigenous knowledge as inputs in the lessons and the IM across other subject areas may be explored.

**Keywords:** K to 12, Contextualized instructional materials, Cultural Funds of Knowledge, Cultural Memory Banking, and Translingualism

### *Introduction*

Fishing is considered as the major source of livelihood in 15 coastal villages in the province of Antique, Philippines. These translocal spaces were transformed into a melting pot of culture and linguistic variation with the arrival of migrant fishers who speak different languages from different islands which commenced five decades ago. The significant fact about this study is an assumption that the migrant fishers’ communities, by its nature, have developed unique cultures, needs, and aspirations that remain intact until now. All these can be drawn from their cultural funds of knowledge. Moreover, as immigrants with a different native language, the translingual features in their narratives were delved and analyzed. There seemed to be limited literature that focuses specifically, on the translingual practices among migrant workers, and a dearth of contextualized instructional materials at present. More so, with the full implementation of the Mother-Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in basic education in the Philippines, children of these migrant fishers are facing difficulties in their mother tongue subjects which are being taught by teachers using the Kinaray-a language. It necessitated the development of contextualized instructional materials which are culturally relevant and consistent with their cultural discourses and written using the home language of the learners. Hence, this study’s overarching aim in generating culturally relevant storybooks in Social Studies, accompanied by teacher’s guides aligned to the standards and competencies in the K to 12 curricula of the Department of Education in the Philippines.

### *Statement of the Problem*

This study aimed to generate cultural funds of knowledge and translingual narratives of migrant fishers in the coastal communities in Antique, Philippines as inputs in the development of culturally relevant instructional materials in Social Studies subject for Grade 3 learners. It sought answers to the following research questions: What are the cultural funds of knowledge of migrant fishers?; What are the translingual features of the narratives drawn from the cultural funds of knowledge of migrant fishers?; and What translingual instructional materials may be developed aligned with the competencies in Social Studies for Grade 3 learners?

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### *Epistemological and Theoretical Framework of the Study*

The framework in this study encompasses the epistemology encapsulated in the theoretical framework, and embedded in the methodology which serves as a guide in choosing the appropriate method, and types of methods used. Figure 1 illustrates the framework of the study.

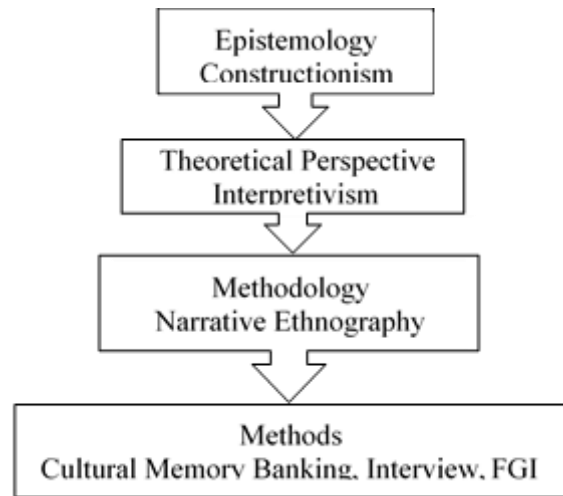


Figure 1. Framework of the study in relation to Crotty's [5] research framework.

*Note:* Adapted from "The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research Process," by Crotty, 1998, London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Culture and language are inseparable. However, attempts at a relationship between them are complex because of the great difficulty in understanding human beings' cognitive processes during communication. Culture is defined by several experts in various ways. Pertierra [13] posited that people used it as a framework for organizing the world. In addition, the author described it as a set of principles that locate and orient human beings within their existential realities. Wardhaugh [15] defined language as a set of knowledge of rules and principles and of the ways of saying and doing things with sounds, words, and sentences rather than just knowledge of specific sounds, words, and sentences. From empirical and epistemological points of departure, the interplay between culture and language is at the nexus of this study. This underpinning perspective underscores the importance of the concept of cultural funds of knowledge which is based on the premise that people have cultural knowledge, and their experiences in life give them that knowledge. Most of the research in this field focuses on understanding the details, processes of life, and lived experiences of people. Bourdieu [2] elucidated the fusion of social and cultural capital theories relative to the concept of funds of knowledge as an integrated theoretical framework. Studies by Moll et al. [10] among others revealed that the rich experiences that students accumulated in their households with parents, siblings, peers, friends, and other members of the community are not only valuable to students' lives, but can aid teachers in understanding the ways in which these experiences can be practically and meaningfully connected to classroom curriculum.

Demographically, the present state of linguistic composition in the world is described by some experts as in a state of "instability." In South East Asian nations, similar realities are happening given the intense diversity of cultures and languages in recent times due to globalization and migration. One of the impactful changes is the shift of language learning perspectives, from monolingual to bilingual, and multilingual. Numerous scholars in the field of linguistics in the 21st century have been engaged in the development of new theories that transcend the monoglossic perspective. García [7] concisely described translanguaging as the "language and meaning-making practices of bilinguals." Subsequently, multiple scholars extended this into various theoretical perspectives which include multilingualism, meaning-making processes, and translingual practices. The underlying concepts and tenets of translanguaging and translingual practice are anchored on the historical development process relative to language development and could be traced to the language perspective of monolingualism [3]. Translingual negotiation strategies. Canagarajah [3] made use of a classification system of negotiation strategies that

encompasses describing multilingual interaction. Canagarajah [3] developed his own macro strategies which he termed translanguaging negotiation strategies that include the following: envoicing, recontextualization, interactional, and entextualization. These were constructed based on personal, contextual, social, and textual aspects of communication acts.

**Methodology**

Narrative ethnography as a research methodology in this study was employed by the researcher. Under the lens of narrative ethnography, the intricacies of fishing knowledge and practices of migrant fishers were delved, tracing its historical development and salient innovations employed in their fishing methods and gears used through the test of times. Along the process, the researcher immersed in their narratives. Actively observing and participating in their activities and fishing practices in their community, and immersing in their narratives, told using their own distinct language made him capture the nuances of the migrant fishers’ culture.

In exploring the migrant fishers’ cultural funds of knowledge, the researcher directly observed the field of study through immersion in the two coastal villages in the province of Antique, Philippines. Six months of immersion provided him the opportunity to enter the life spaces of migrant fishers and participate in their fishing practices. It has given him opportunities to directly observe and document the participants’ narratives and all the vital processes and practices relative to their life space as fishers. Moreover, an array of methods was utilized in this study which includes the following: fieldwork, focus group interview, key informant interview, photography, and videography. The study was conducted in the most populous coastal villages of migrant fishers, in Antique, Philippines.

Primary participants were chosen based on the purposive sampling technique. Creswell [4] writes that among the sampling techniques used in the qualitative study, purposive sampling aptly fits in selecting informants who possess rich knowledge and experiences relative to the research topic. Primary participants were the seven migrant fishers and six subsidiary or secondary participants who are mostly wives or daughters of migrant fishers. To purposively choose the primary participants, inclusion criteria were put into consideration, most particularly on the following parameters: migrant fishers’ home of origin; the number of years in the coastal community; the number of years in fishing; and status of fishing experience (owner of sea vessel or crew in a big vessel. Pseudonyms were used in the study as agreed upon in the consent form with them relative to ethical considerations.

Cultural memory banking procedure was employed, which is composed of three specific phases, namely; documentation, reconstruction, and systematization which enabled the researcher to generate memory banks. As shown in Figure 2, the cultural memory banking procedures, specific methods used, and the corresponding outputs in each phase are illustrated.

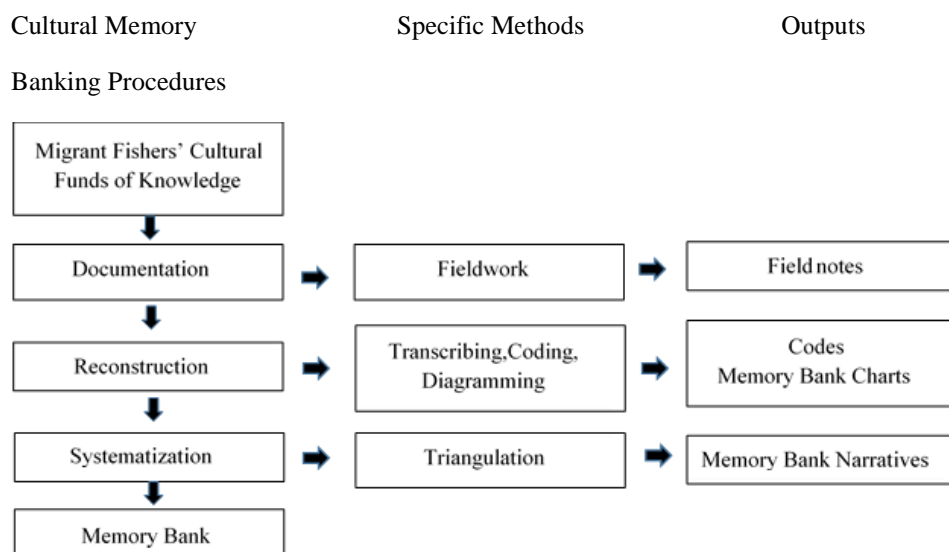


Figure 2. The cultural memory banking detailed procedure used in the study.

*Note.* Adapted from “Cultural memory and biodiversity,” by V. Nazarea, 1998, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1gwqrgx> <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1gwqrgx>.

All narratives were audio recorded using a digital voice recorder and observations were noted in the field note. Generation of verbatim interview transcripts was performed. Moreover, all transcribed interviews were uploaded and coded in the QDA Miner Lite, version 2.0.9 to systematically process codes into categories. These codes were categorized by the use of diagramming in order to construct memory bank charts which served as the different dimensions of community seeds in the migrant fishers’ community. In order to achieve the accuracy and validity of the results, triangulation was performed in this phase. All research methods used in the study were correlated to triangulate the data. The different research methods applied in the study which included participant - observations, key informant interviews, fieldwork, and visual data were pulled together to triangulate the data and the processes of counter-checking and verification by the fishers. To ensure accuracy, these data were presented and discussed with the participants during the conduct of the focus group interview.

Polkinghorne’s analysis of narratives or the paradigmatic mode of analysis was adapted in constructing the narratives in the study. This mode of analysis seeks to identify common themes or conceptual manifestations discovered in the data, and these findings would be arranged around descriptions of themes that are common across collected stories [13]. From the narratives constructed, three storybooks were developed utilizing the Culturally Responsive Instructional Material Development Model (CRIMDM) model that the researcher purposely designed primarily for this study.

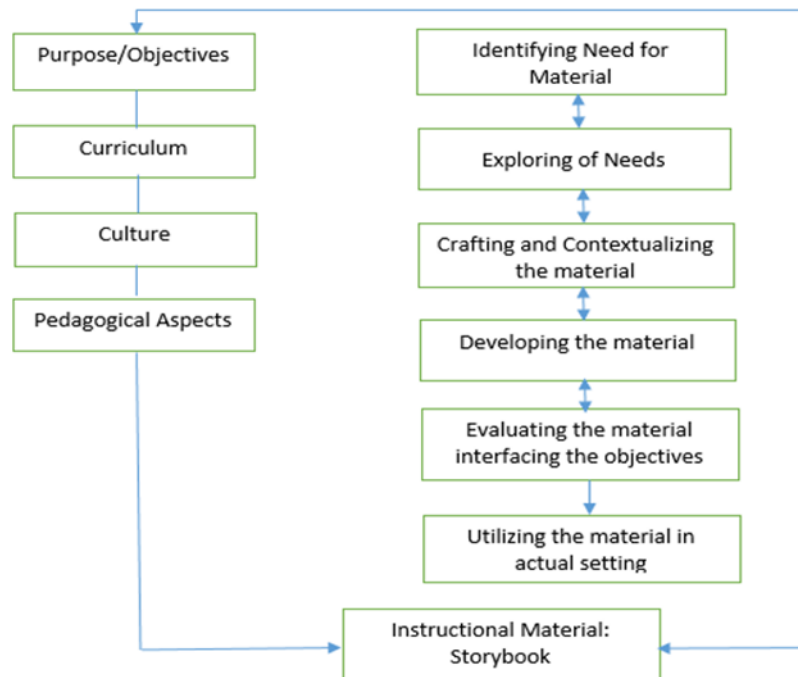


Figure 3. Culturally Responsive Instructional Material Development Model (CRIMDM) Framework.

Each storybook has a corresponding teacher’s guide aligned with the content standards, performance standards, and learning competencies in the Curriculum Guide by the Department of Education. In curriculum diversity, selecting instructional materials which are appropriate to the content and needs of learners is considered an important factor.

According to Akanbi [1], instructional materials are being utilized by both the teachers and learners in the learning spaces for instructional purposes. Ogaga et al. [9] underscored the vital roles of instructional materials for learning to occur that resulted from the acquisition of skills, knowledge, facts, or new information. Moreover, effective

learning can be attained as a result of the reinforcement of instructional materials in stimulating, motivating, and captivating the attention of the learners in the teaching-learning process.

In terms of the impact of instructional materials on the performance of students in social studies, the study of Ogaga et al. [9] showed a significant association between the two. The sufficiency and suitability of instructional materials showed a direct connection to the accomplishment of the objectives and effectiveness of the teaching-learning process. Relatively, it implies the notable association between the effective teaching of social studies subjects and the availability of instructional materials. Hence, it underscores the importance of an effective mechanism in the selection of the material to be used in the lesson by the teacher.

In the Philippines, DepEd Order 74, s.2009 specifically emphasized schools produce low-cost instructional materials at the local level putting into prioritization the aspects of teaching beginning reading and teaching literature to children. Furthermore, it considerably underscores the importance of originality, appropriateness of the materials to the age, cultural background, including the language used.

In addition, DepEd Order 90, s. 2011 [6] entitled the Guidelines on the Utilization of Downloaded Funds for Materials Development and Production of MTB-MLE emphasized the synchronization and decentralization in the production of indigenized teaching and learning materials among pilot schools. The Department of Education articulated officially in DepEd Order 21, s. 2019 [5] which directed schools to use the local language for their MTB-MLE program as long that they could comply with the four minima (or essentials) which include orthography, documentation of grammar, dictionary, and literature (i.e., big books, story books, etc.).

This entails a very challenging concern on equipping teachers with the necessary skills on contextualized instructional materials in the approved mother tongue in their area. Given the fact that MTB-MLE deals with minority languages where limited materials have been published, teachers were given the extra task of developing children's literature that will be used in teaching their pupils. On the other hand, storybook publishers tend to view producing reading materials in such language as very costly and may be impractical given the small number of speakers of a minority language. Instead, the publishing industry in the Philippines could only provide reading materials in major languages such as English and Filipino but they don't have the capacity to supply reading materials in local languages. In addition, it was found that only 45% of the sample schools have conducted big book writing activities according to the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) inquiry into MTB-MLE [8]. Similarly, a lack of materials like the big books undermines teachers' confidence in implementing the program as attested by findings of several studies [7].

## Results

### *Cultural Funds of Knowledge*

Migrant fishers have rich and varied cultures in fishing in terms of knowledge and beliefs, as well as practices given their migratory nature which are not simply manifestations of their distinctive strategy for survival but are also reflective of their cultural system. Their fishing practices are highly varied and adaptive based on their local knowledge of fish behavior and fishing techniques developed over time by putting into consideration the environmental dynamics.

The migrant fishers are engaged in *pamalaran* or tuna fishing, both small-scale and commercial fishing. Albeit it to say that in spite of the gradual shifts in the fishing gears used in fishing tuna as they adapt innovations in their fishing practices and processes, still their distinct culture manifested in their beliefs and cultural practices in *pamalaran* are intact even on this day and age. These are reflected in the memory bank chart in *pamalaran* fishing.

Table 1.

Cultural Memory Bank of Migrants' Fishing Practices

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- A small-scale fishing practice among migrant fishers using hook and line.

- A handline fishing practice that fishers used “*buga-buga*” as an innovative fishing technique as bait for tuna.
- Fishing is highly valued as a family heritage among fishers of *pamalaran*
- The practice of “*trapik*” among *pamalaran* fishers strengthen community good relationships
- The practice of “*panguyang*” as food offering for good harvest particularly for the newly-built *sikad-sikad* or *kanter* as sea vessels used in *pamalaran*. Two white feathered geese (male & female) cooked, and ripe *langka* or jackfruit are offered to members of the family and other people present in the ceremony.
- Boats are washed with water boiled with *tanglad* or lemon grass leaves for good fortune. The aroma of *tanglad* entices fish to the boat.
- Presence of replica of *santos* or saints in the captain’s *kubyerta* in the *kanter* (*big boat*) shows the religiosity of fishers.
- Dried flowers from *santos* most particularly from Santo Intiero as *pangalap* during Lenten season are used in *tuob* or fumigation every Tuesday and Friday.
- The practice of “*sampara*” or sharing their fish catch to anybody who helped the fisher in unloading fish or lifting/pulling the boat to safe ground at the shore. This sharing practice among fishers is vital in maintaining social cohesion among members of the coastal community.
- Existence of “*starting – plussing*” scheme among *ama* or *amo* who finances the fishing venture in *pamalaran*. The *starting* serves as the initial capital outlay while *plussing* refers to the additional amount of money (Php 5.00) for every kilo of fish catch claimed by the financiers.
- Knowledge of wind directions: *habagat*, *amihan*, *salatan*, and *kanaway* based on their experiences guided them in vital decisions relative to their safety in fishing.
- Environmental indicators or unnatural behavior from animals (i.e. *agukoy* or sea crab) plants, and heavenly bodies guided them in ensuring safety at sea.
- Their belief that “*mas mariit sa lawod*” or enchantment and more perilous at sea, guided them in practicing *lihi* associated with sea spirits, enchanted and dangerous zones at sea, and avoided taboos in fishing.
- Their belief in the existence of *taglugar* or spirits who dwell in the area guided them in their fishing and behavior, and their manner of communication (i.e. mentioning of name of any animal while fishing is a taboo as well as talking *mangarasti* or in boastful manner at sea).

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Wives and offspring in a fishing household manifested their support to the major source of living by performing offshore two practices, specifically in relation to the preparation of fishing gear used by their husbands in fishing.



Figure 4. The five fishing practices of migrant fishers with the participation of their wives in the preparation of fishing gear.

### *Translanguaging Praxis*

The diaspora of migrant fishers from Dalaguete, Cebu to Hinobaan, Negros Occidental, and eventually to the shores of Maybato Norte, Antique in the Philippines contributed to the development of their cultural practices relative to their livelihood vis-a-vis diversity of linguistic features in their language use. Language contacts in these translocal spaces have vital influences on how they acquire and develop their communication in the practice of their livelihood in a multilingual and multicultural environment which is a clear manifestation of diversity in language situations in present times. In cognizance of the contextual situation, Dalagetnon fishers who first set foot on the shores of Antique are considered the first generation of fishers. Their children who grew up mostly in the coastal village of Culipapa, a coastal barangay in Hinobaan, Negros Occidental, and migrated to Maybato Norte are considered as the second generation in my study. Children who were born and grew up in Maybato Norte and San Fernando belong to the third generation of fishers. The majority of their children are into fishing since then. This intergenerational succession of their livelihood vis-à-vis the migratory nature of living and mobility has an underlying impact on their lives as bilinguals and multilingual living in multicultural and multilingual spaces. Specifically, linguistic features in their narratives are representative of the mix of languages that occurred, given their multicultural existence.

In terms of their translanguaging negotiation strategies, the use of word coinage and occurrence of code-switching, categorized as envoicing strategy, are employed. Furthermore, confirmation check, clarification, recast, and let-it-pass strategies are observed. These are categorized as interactional strategies.

### *Mobility and languaging.*

Mobility speaks volumes of how migrant fishers lived their lives for several decades. This reality underscores how cultures and languages flow across borders and the dynamicity in languages they acquired in terms of the varied linguistic landscapes in every place that they inhabit.

In the coastal community in the Philippines, migrant fishers are labeled as “mga Cebuano” or the Cebuanos, regardless of the type of language they speak or the place where they came from. This label might hold water due to their ethnicity, but linguistically, they are multilingual who communicate using a code-mix of Cebuano – Hiligaynon – Kinaray-a languages in their daily communication.

This is related to the study of Nguyen [12] who cited that the intra-sentential category was based on the grammatical functions in the sentence or statements. In the context of the narrative in the study, this category is aligned with the translanguaging perspective that posits the idea that a flow of thought can be expressed in more than one language. Insertion of words or phrases and clauses as syntactic boundaries was utilized to show the continuity of languaging, which may refer to the code-switching to English, Cebuano, and Kinaray-a. The occurrence of intra-sentential translanguaging in phrases and clauses could be gleaned from the excerpt of my interview with Ren when asked how he come to know Antique.



(Well, I knew of many people from our place who came here in Antique. They just came here on vacation. Then one person in our place said, “Are you going to come with us? We will go to Antique. I answered, why, what are we going to work there? We will go fishing. I went here without the knowledge of my parents. I just went with my friends. When we were already traveling by sea, I felt nauseated. I vomited Sir because of the big waves here. Then, by the time we arrived here, the situation is, I don’t have a house to live in. What I did was, I lived in my friend’s house. Well, I lived with them. Sometimes I stayed in the pump boat, I also ate there. It is better to live in the pump boat because it has a lot of food. All our foods are stocked there).

*Storybook and Teacher’s Guide*

Cognizant of the theme from the cultural funds of knowledge of the migrant fishers, three original translingual storybooks were developed. Distinct cultural knowledge, beliefs, and practices of migrant fishers were incorporated into the development of the plot, setting, theme, and characterization of the storybooks. Developing a culturally laden instructional material entails clarity in the alignment of its content to the target competencies set forth in the MTB-MLE curriculum and classroom realities. Bridging the curriculum and the realities of our learners’ life spaces as influenced by their culture requires a formal communication tool for effective teaching and learning processes to happen.

The teacher’s guide was purposely designed in order to act as an effective tool in meeting the needs of the teachers for learning and in providing support to the goals to be enacted upon. Communicating the goals clearly and their connection to the learning activities planned for the lesson is one very essential support that it provides to the teachers. In addition, the International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP) of UNESCO underscored the important functions of a teacher’s guide. It further provides knowledge and support to help understand and implement teaching plans. Finally, it engages teachers in ongoing reflection.



Figure 5. Three original, translingual, and contextualized storybooks in Social Studies for Grade 3 were developed, evaluated, and pilot tested. Each storybook is accompanied by a Teacher’s Guide aligned with the Curriculum Guide and MELC of the Department of Education in the Philippines.

The teacher’s guide was evaluated utilizing the duly validated researcher-made Evaluation Rating Sheet for Teacher’s Guide indicating four main indicators; Objectives, Subject Matter/Content, Procedure, and Evaluation. The rating sheet was validated by three experts in reading, statistics, and instructional materials development. The evaluators rated the three storybooks as Very Acceptable and the teacher’s guides as Excellent using Mean. Table 2 presents the result of the evaluation of the three storybooks.

Table 2. The Evaluation of Storybooks

Storybooks	Mean	Descriptive Rating
Ang Pagsuroy ni Barongoy	3.92	Very Acceptable
<i>(The Journey of Barongoy)</i>	3.70	Very Acceptable
Ang Grasya sa Pamalaran	3.78	Very Acceptable
<i>(The Many Graces in Pamalaran Fishing)</i>		
Mga Duag Kang Pagpalangga ni Nanay		
<i>(Colors of Mother’s Love)</i>		



The result shows that the storybooks are culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate, and can be easily and independently used by the target users. Likewise, the evaluation of the teacher's guide reflects the appropriateness, accuracy, and validity of the learning objectives, subject matter, procedure, and evaluation.

Table 3. The Evaluation of Teacher's Guide

Teacher's Guide	Mean	Descriptive Rating
Ang Pagsuroy ni Barongoy	4.85	Excellent
<i>(The Journey of Barongoy)</i>	4.93	Excellent
Ang Grasya sa Pamalaran		Excellent
<i>(The Many Graces in Pamalaran Fishing)</i>	4.98	
Mga Duag Kang Pagpalangga ni Nanay		
<i>(Colors of Mother's Love)</i>		

Note: 4.51-5.00 Excellent; 3.51-4.50 Very Satisfactory; 2.51-3.50 Satisfactory;

1.51- 2.50 Fair; 1.00-1.50 Poor

An actual demonstration in a Social Studies for Grade Three class in Maybato Elementary School was conducted. A teacher in the said school who is a Master Teacher 1 utilized the storybooks in her Social Studies subject in Grade 3. An observation checklist was used during the observation of the demonstration. Feedback and comments from the panel and the teachers were considered for further enhancement of the storybook. Incorporation of observations and feedback from the panel, demonstration teacher, and principal during the validation was performed, and these served as bases for revisions as the need may be.

#### **Implications and recommendations**

In cognizance of the findings in this study, implications for theory and practice are advanced. For theory, the crux of the funds of knowledge is the underlying assumption that the community of migrant fishers is rich with their distinct beliefs, knowledge, and practices, and these daily realities have equipped their children with valuable knowledge and skills at home. These accumulated bodies of knowledge, skills, and information available in the learner's households and the coastal communities are very valuable for their learning. If these are embedded in their learning, in various activities as well as in instructional materials in the learning spaces, the disconnection between curriculum and the daily realities will dissipate.

For practice, various fishing practices in the findings of this study are the realities that school children in the coastal communities have. These local realities imply a plethora of valuable importance when adapted and integrated into the curriculum in various aspects of utilization. In cognizance of the localization and contextualization concepts highlighted in the MTB-MLE curriculum framework, these realities could be put to good use when they are embedded in the lessons of school children because of their meaning and relevance to their lives. Culturally responsive lessons are flexible, fit, creative, and adaptive to children's level of understanding, linguistic nature and needs, and instructional needs. Hence, lessons are becoming more real-life, customized, and appropriate.

In addition, this narrative ethnographic study analyzed the translingual features present in the narratives of migrant fishers. Taking into account their multilingual nature in which the fusion of three languages mixed or meshed together in their language at home, which clearly implies that this describes their mother tongue has a direct effect on how they communicate in school. Albeit it says that it implies miscommunication occurrences at times which may transpire inside the learning spaces in the context of the teaching and learning process. This is aligned with the translanguaging pedagogies that according to Garcia [8] should promote interaction and inclusion, drawing upon what students know individually and collectively.

The study recommends that school heads or principals may establish a support system and provide necessary resources for the teachers. Contextualizing community resources as inputs in the lessons and activities across subject areas in the lessons may be explored by providing opportunities for teachers to explore. Training or seminars may be initiated in the conduct of their in-service training and other related school activities most

particularly during the conduct of their Learning Action Cells (LAC) sessions that would further enhance and equip teachers in various pedagogical techniques which are relevant to their diverse learners. For teachers, innovative and creative classroom activities that integrate the cultural practices in the coastal communities that could trigger the interest of students towards the subject matter may be utilized. They may utilize local and indigenous resources available in the community in their classroom activities. The contextualized storybook developed in this study may also be utilized in teaching the mother tongue and in social studies subjects.

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